TIME IS MONEY



A Simple System To Cure Procrastination Without Willpower, Become More Productive, Find Your Focus & Get More Done In Less Time!

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Thank You

More In This Series...

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– INTRODUCTION –

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– THE THREE BRAINS –

Have you ever wondered why you've never been able to FINISH everything you wished to accomplish?

And, have you ever had a really great idea, with every intention to act on it, but it just always seems to fall by the wayside? Almost everyone I've ever known has had this happen to them.

Have you ever tried to build a habit but failed over-and-over again? When you sit down to try to work on something do you find you're unfocused and frequently distracted?

If you said yes to any of those questions, please don't beat yourself up. If you believe yourself to be a procrastinator, you're not the only one out there, even though it might feel that way at times.

I'm going to tell you:

1. Procrastination isn't your fault.
2. It happens because of the way the brain is hard-wired.

That's right, you're literally hard-wired to put things off until the last minute, or never even do it at all.

When I was procrastinating, I believed I never really had any free time. In reality, I was spending my time worrying about all the things I need to do, that I wasn't doing and I was doing unproductive activities that didn't benefit my life in anyway.

What would your life be like if you were free of procrastination?

- More money?
- More freedom?
- More choices?
- More control?
- Less stress and worry?
- Higher self-esteem?

In this book, I'm going to talk about why procrastination happens to begin with and handle the myths regarding procrastination:

- Why you procrastinate
- What stops you from doing the things you want too
- What you can do to actually get rid of procrastination

Unfortunately, 99% of the solutions you see out there, are really unproductive. In fact, some can even be counter-productive to helping you eliminate your procrastination. If you try one of the solutions available, and it fails. It creates a negative feedback loop in your brain, only making your procrastination problem worse.

The Difference Between You & Successful People

The truth is there's very little difference between those that are very successful and you. Let's imagine for a moment that people are cars. And, successful people are a Lamborghini that can elegantly drive down the road effortlessly. The truth is that anyone is capable of doing that, even if you feel like you're struggling to operate at 15 mph (or if you've broken down and can't start). The truth is that you ARE a Lamborghini, the only thing you're missing is the air in the tires.

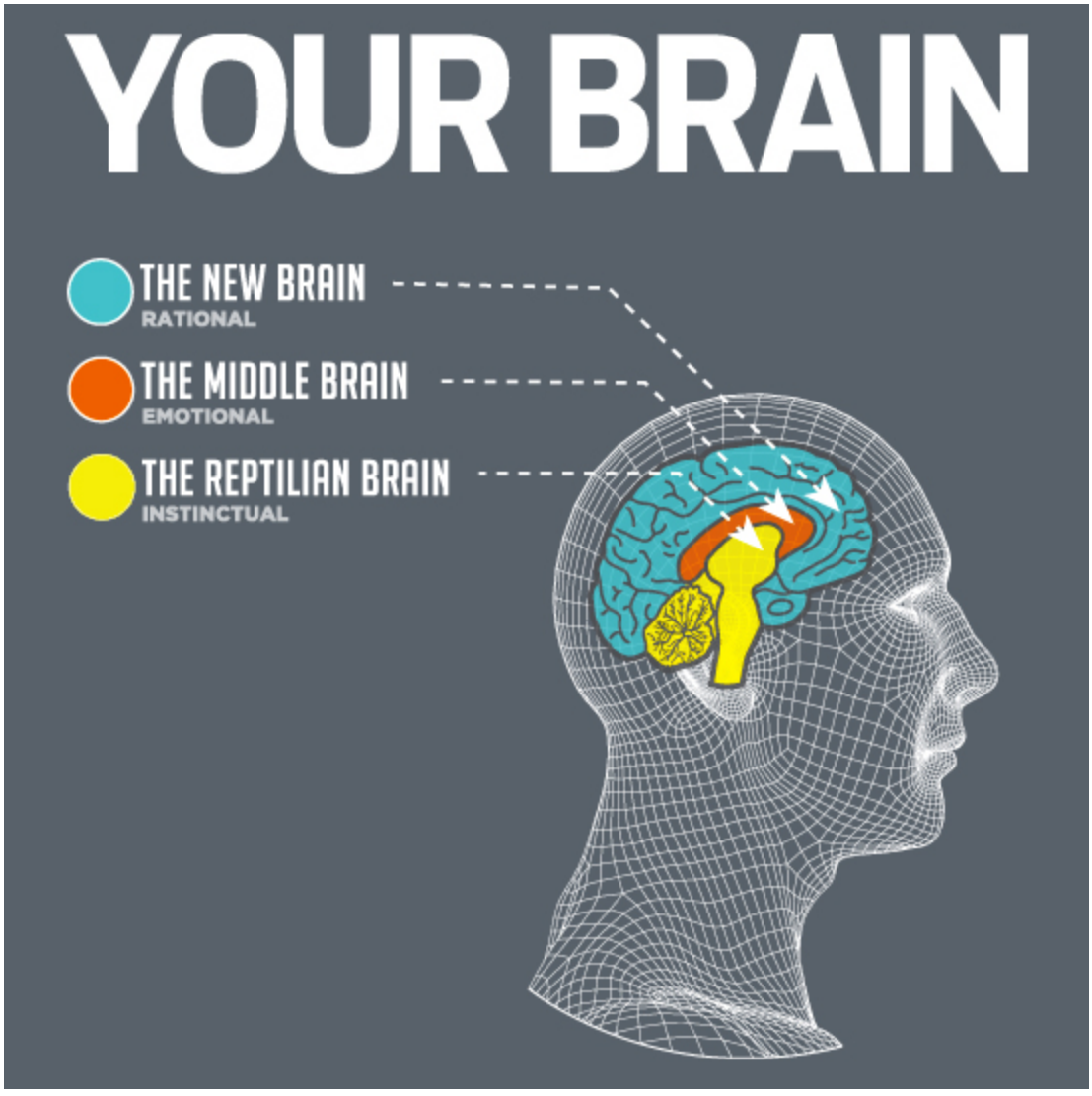
Once you understand how to break through procrastination, you'll be racing down the road. There's nothing inherently wrong with you, you're not broken. All you need is to be shown how to increase your capacity, and that's what this book is all about.

Scientific Reason Why You Procrastinate

I’m going to keep this really basic because I find using too many medical or technical terms can bore people and make them procrastinate.

When you think of your brain, most people think of only one brain. When really, you have three brains, they’re just stacked on top of each other.

1. Thinking (Primate brain)
2. Middle (Mammal brain)
3. Brain Stem (Reptile brain)



Brain Stem

This part of the brain is responsible for our survival instincts, just at a very primitive level. This is the part of your brain that is responsible for all things unconscious, keeping your heart pumping blood, lungs functioning, ect. Your brain stem, being the most primitive part of the brain, isn't very wise and is what gets you into a lot of trouble.

The brain stem only recognizes information coming in as one of four categories, also called the four F's:

1. **Food:** Something to eat.
2. **Fight:** To fight something.
3. **Flight:** Run away or hide.
4. **F*ck:** To procreate.

Middle Brain

The middle brain is responsible for our emotions. The middle brain can only perceive information as pain or pleasure.

1. **Pain:** Avoid that thing at all costs
2. **Pleasure:** This feels good, give me more

What's important to note about your middle brain is that if you're not careful, it sets off an alarm that has a HUGE effect on your nervous system. It's called the amygdala, this is the caveman brain. This so-called alarm was designed to alert us of potential danger. That way, when the alarm goes off, you get out there and quick! Just imagine a caveman being attacked by an animal. Ring, ring, ring!

There is nothing rational about this alarm. This is an instant response that is automatic. If you were a child and got your hand a little too close to the fireplace and burnt yourself, you'd quickly pull your hand away. This is a response that tells you, "If you feel that sensation, pull your hand away immediately!"

The problem we face in the 21st century is that we really don't have much need for this alarm anymore. Sure, there are certain situations it comes in

handy, but for the more part, it actually hinders our progression. This alarm can't tell the different between a caveman being attacked and you having to finish a project for a deadline. The alarm can be set off by something really simple things like vacuuming the house, having to exercise, or doing any activity that you don't feel confident in.

There's nothing logical about it, but it's linked to danger. Which unfortunately, is the majority of activities we're not able to accomplish. You really don't need an intellectual understanding of why this happens for this system to rid you of your procrastination. It's just good to have an understanding as to why you do what you do.

If you're procrastinating on anything, putting anything off, it means your alarm has been set off.

How this shows up in the body is always physical, but you might not recognize it anymore because you've been suppressing that feeling for many years. It's usually an anxious feeling, something in the pit of your stomach, tightness in your chest or a lump in your throat. It doesn't matter where you're experiencing the sensations, it's just the physiology of fear that leads to procrastination.

Fear is what makes you procrastinate.

When people procrastinate long enough they start to believe that there's something wrong with them. We feel really bad, talk badly to ourselves, we don't understand why we can't achieve our goals, no matter how hard we try. We feel stuck.

There is nothing wrong with you.

All that's happened is you set out to do something and you set off the alarm that linked a certain behavior to danger. As I mentioned, there are times when you feel nothing. The way you know the alarm has been set off is because you're spinning your wheels not going anywhere. No big deal, I'm going to show you how to work around this.

Thinking Brain

This is where our rational mind sits, it's the largest part of the brain. This is where the higher brain functions such as thought and action are performed. Thinking, learning, analyzing, deciding, criticizing and judging. This is the part of the brain that separates us from all the other animals on this planet. This is where our ego hides and where our self-identity is.

Here's the problem:

Every little piece of information that goes through your senses, must first go through the bottom two brains before it reaches the thinking brain. All of it!

Once your alarm has been set off, it's impossible for your thinking brain to "out think" the alarm, or communicate with the middle brain, to tell it there's no real danger. Think of a time when you might have had a lot of drive and motivation to do something for a few days, then all of the sudden it's as though someone threw the brakes on, and you started avoiding the activity or behavior.

This is because your thinking brain was taken over by your other two brains. I'm going to explain to you how to get rid of your procrastination problems. I guarantee you, you'll never procrastinate again!

Exercises

1. List the areas of your life and the things in those areas that you've been putting things off that you'd like to stop procrastinating on.
2. Choose ONE thing that you want to stop procrastinating on and list at least three reasons WHY you want this thing.
3. What is procrastination costing you? (List all the emotional and tangible aspects such as money, time, relationships, stress, self-esteem, ect.)
4. What would your life look like if you never procrastinated or had a procrastination problem? (How would you feel? What would you do everyday? What would be gone from your life?)

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– 1 –

WHY DO WE PROCRASTINATE?

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– REASONS FOR PROCRASTION –

I’ve already scientifically explained why we procrastinate but now I’m going to discuss all the methods people use and fail with.

Long-Term Goal Method

This is a very common method when it comes to “getting things done”. Or, in the case of the chronic procrastinator, a common method would be “things I’d like to get done but will never get around to doing.” When it comes to achieving goals, visualization and vision boards play a vital role in focusing on your goal. Very few people are motivated long term from a goal they set. The issue is that the extrinsic motivation doesn’t last very long and takes a different image or object, think novelty, to spark your emotional drive to continue moving towards the goal. This is because the rational brain can not over power the animal brain.

There are three parts to achieving a goal:

1. Define what you want
2. Constantly focus on the goal
3. Clear the resistance that results from you focus on the goal

It really doesn’t matter how you focus on your goal, everyone has a different way of doing it. Incantations, writing your goals out daily, vision boards, or visualizations just to name a few. It all boils down to the same thing, You need to consistently focus on your goal or objective. Truth be told, what you want and what you focus on matters very little in terms of goal achievement and getting things done.

The reason why so many people have trouble doing the things they want to is because of resistance. The bottom line is that you need to clear or resolve the resistance in order to take action. To put it simply, if you can resolve the resistance you can have almost anything you desire.

Let me repeat this again, it's the most important component. If you can resolve your resistance you can have almost anything you want. Defining what you want, and even focusing on it daily is easy. The hard part is dealing with the resistance that results from this. Resistance can show up in many forms, fear, anger, anxiety, frustration, confusion, feeling tired, ect.

If you have trouble doing the things you want to do, you have resistance to doing that thing or things.

Of course, anyone will eventually achieve their goal if they can persist, but most won't because it'll be insanely difficult due to the fact that they'll be resolving resistance in the material world.

You know what will happen?

You'll get sick, get the flu. Major difficulties and hardships will materialize in your life, calamities, ect. If you can get through this though it means that you've resolved your resistance. Why? Because all of this is nothing more than materialized resistance.

Willpower Method

The willpower method goes hand-in-hand with the long-term method. Because many people will want to do something, and feel they have to force themselves to do it.

Set a goal to lose a few pounds for the summer. Force yourself to wake up early, than force yourself to go to the gym, than force yourself to restrict your calories, than force yourself to eat something healthy.

You get the point.

This is why it’s so darn difficult to achieve anything in the face of resistance. There are very few people on this planet that can push through the pain of resistance when you’re standing knee deep in the thick of it. I assure you, if you’re reading this book, you’re not someone who can overcome resistance with discipline.

What makes using willpower such a horrible method for procrastinators. Is that, every time you fail at something, you’re giving your subconscious evidence that you can’t do it. You’re creating a failure loop. Whenever you set out to do something, your subconscious will say, “Well, this is a waste of time, you won’t follow through on this just like everything else.”

What happens next?

You try to do something, you tell yourself that, “This time is going to be different.” You force yourself to do it, and after a few days or weeks you stop. Only reinforcing to your subconscious, that yes, you don’t finish what you start.

Very common, not very effective. You only have so much willpower, and everything you have to make yourself do drains the “willpower tank”. This is why you’re able to force yourself to do something in the beginning but after a while you just can’t do it anymore.

Willpower is a must for getting you started on a new behavior, but most people bite off more than they can chew. Never having enough willpower long-term to keep consistent in order to develop that behavior into a habit.

Punishment

Setting deadlines with a miserable outcome if you don’t hit the deadline. Donate money to an organization you hate. Negative self-talk in order to try to motivate us which leads to labeling and creating negative beliefs about yourself. If you keep calling yourself a procrastinator, lazy, a failure, or worse. You’ll start to believe it.

Punishment can actually hurt your motivation and lower your self-esteem. This happens because when you get closer to your deadline your stress goes up and this actually hurts your performance. You'll be wanting to suppress your negative emotions by using something to escape the emotions. If you can actually motivate yourself to complete the task-at-hand, you'll do the minimum effort than go back to your procrastinating ways. Sound familiar?

You're also hurting your focus by focusing on the punishment. Most people aren't motivated by negativity, otherwise there wouldn't be so many procrastinators in the world. Majority of people are motivated by rewards, not punishment. Therefore, by focusing on the punishment you can't focus on the reward. When you create a habit you always finish the behavior with a reward, never a punishment. The same should be applied to deadlines but aren't. More people would be motivated by a big-juicy reward for hitting the deadline. Than they would be knowing there's a punishment waiting for them if they miss the mark.

Changing the Negative Self-Talk Habit

Start by becoming aware of what you're saying to yourself. This will take some conscious effort. Our mind is in constant motion, and only someone who is experienced in meditation knows the amount of effort required to silent the mind. Don't beat yourself up if your mind is habitually focused on negative self-talk. It actually makes things worse.

Once you become aware of what you're doing, start rewarding your awareness of that behavior. Your brain LOVES rewards, find ways to give yourself rewards for everything positive you do.

4 Reasons For Procrastination

1. Indifference
2. Distraction
3. Indecision
4. Anxiety & Fear

Indifference: The animal brain doesn't want you to do something, unless it knows that there's an immediate reward for completing the task. You can use an immediate reward to create a powerful internal drive that will keep pushing you to move forward. It has to be a real reward, something you genuinely believe to be rewarding. Your brain isn't stupid, it is your brain. You'll know if you're trying to trick yourself or not. A piece of celery isn't rewarding for someone trying to start exercising, whereas a yummy piece of chocolate cake is for that person.

Distraction: The animal brain is easily distracted. It reacts to immediate threats and opportunities and makes it harder to focus, making you want to avoid doing the work. I'm going to show you how to achieve a laser-like focus quickly and easily to continually work towards your goals. Focus, like most areas of life, is just a muscle. It's something that can be easily built to become stronger-and-stronger.

Indecision: A lot of people procrastinate because they're unsure of themselves. That's why its commonly preached to "just do it". When you have to make a choice between two or more things. The animal brain will get you to do just about anything to avoid having to make that decision. It's funny how desirable cleaning your room becomes when you've got to do something you don't want to. This is what gets you to browse the internet or watch a video when you know you shouldn't be.

The animal brain will cause you to avoid work entirely or do whatever it can. In order, to get you to put off making a decision or taking action. Which means you will work, but you won't do the thing thats the most important because it requires a decision to be made. There's a simple way to break this indecisive pattern to keep you moving toward your goal, which I'll discuss later in the book. Just like distraction, indecisiveness makes you want to avoid working.

Anxiety & Fear: This will bring up the "fight or flight" response in humans. Unfortunately for us, like deers, humans are hard-wired to flight. Once fear comes up, we've got to get out of that situation. We will do anything to avoid anything that causes anxiety or fear. Which is why you might find yourself escaping when you feel a negative emotion.

For example, you might want to lose weight but every time you think of going to the gym you feel anxiety. Therefore, you might browse Facebook or watch some videos online to distract your brain and suppress the emotions. By no means does escaping make the situation better, in fact, it makes it worse. This is just how procrastinators use their natural flight response to get away from the emotions.

Exercises

1. In the past what are some of the ways you've used punishment to motivate yourself?
2. How do you talk to yourself negatively when you make a mistake or keep repeating something you're trying to avoid?
3. How will you start rewarding yourself? List ways in which you'll reward yourself when you notice you've made a mistake.

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BUILDING HABITS

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– DEVELOPING HABITS THAT STICK –

This is going to be a short primer in what habits are, and how they work. I want to begin by discussing the differences between habits (automatic) and routines (scheduled).

Habits: Automatic behavior — brushing your teeth, getting dressed, getting up at a certain time.

Routines: These are scheduled behaviors such as going to the gym 3-4x a week. This is going to require conscious thought to complete. Whereas, true habits are automatic behaviors but its very commonly discussed that we use the word habit to describe a routine or ritual.

The 3 R's of Habit Formation

1. **Reminder:** The cue or trigger that starts the habit
2. **Routine:** The action you take. The habit itself.
3. **Reward:** The benefit you gain from doing the habit.

When you do something good or bad, as long as theres a reward, it signals to the brain by releasing dopamine that you should do the cycle again. And every time you repeat the cycle you get closer to forming a true habit.

The 3 Things That Stop You From Starting A Habit:

1. Mindset
2. Energy
3. Willpower

Mindset: This is your thoughts and beliefs about yourself and how you perceive the world. This main thing here is to consider the negative thoughts and beliefs you hold. Because positive thoughts don't hold you back, they actually empower you. The problem is that the negative thoughts are a lot easier to latch yourself onto. The mind naturally gravitates towards negativity, it takes work to train it to become naturally positive.

Energy: If you don't have the energy to get started, you never will. Habits in essence, are getting started each day to perform a new behavior. If you slip you for just one day, you can risk ruining your progress. Some may think this is just willpower, but energy is vastly different. You need to have the energy to perform a behavior, otherwise you'll always be too tired or never be in the mood to take that tiny action step.

Willpower: This is used to maintain consistency and discipline over the long-run, until you actually start to see results which will motivate your to continue performing that behavior.

Mindset

This is probably the most important section of this entire book. Everyone has a rough idea of what they need to do to improve their life. It's getting past these negative thoughts that make you second guess yourself, which is the hard part.

Success is like an iceberg, what people see is only on the surface. Which is a very small percentage of an iceberg. Whereas people don't see or talk about how long the person has been working at something for and all the hard work, sacrifices, persistence, focus and failure that they've endured.

I always recommend people focus on the ends, not the means. Focus on where you want to go, not where you currently are. But the problem with that is when people focus on where they want to go, they're not taking into consideration the person they have to become to get there.

Because if who you were today was capable of having your audacious life goals, you'd already have them. Meaning, you're going to have to change

who you current are (your thoughts and behaviors) to get to where you want to go. Some people will have a lot to change, some very little. It really comes down to how big your goals are.

Most people don't want to put in the work each day, and take life one-day at a time. It's not sexy, there's really nothing fun about it in the beginning. It's flat out hard work. If success was easy everyone would do it.

The Layers of Behavior Change

Your Appearance: This is the way the world perceives you. If you become a millionaire or improved your appearance through diet and exercise. This is what the world sees.

Your Performance: This is the actions you take. You made 100 sales calls a day or you ran 1 mile everyday.

Your Identity: This is who you are, your self-image. This is the type of person you see yourself as. You're the type of person that picks up the phone to call a prospect even if you're not in the mood. Or, you're the type of person that wakes up early and never misses a workout.

The biggest issue with this is that the majority of people look outside of themselves to make changes. They focus on trying to change the outside world, by focusing on the outside world. When in actuality they should be focused on changing their inner world first. By changing your thoughts and beliefs, you'll automatically begin to change your appearance and performance.

That isn't to say you should sit around and do nothing. In fact, changing your identity is probably the hardest thing to do. Yet, it's far easier to change your self-image by taking tiny actions such as going to the gym and eating healthier. Then it would be spending 10 minutes each day visualizing yourself with your desired body-type.

Every time you perform a behavior you're telling your brain, I'am this type of person. This even works on the negative side of things, every time you

stop doing something, you're telling your brain I'm the type of person that doesn't finish what I start. Taking tiny actions each day to sneak past mental resistance to doing something. Is the most effective way to changing your beliefs about yourself.

The rest of this book will show you how to start new behaviors, which will subtly change your beliefs. Which will create lifelong habits and behaviors that will empower you.

Focus on lifestyle changes, not life-changing outcomes. Meaning, develop habits that support the actions needed for you to achieve your goals. This comes back to focusing on the ends, not the means. It sounds contradictory, but in terms of goals, focus on what you want. In terms of habits, focus on what person you need to become to get those goals. It's far more important to focus on the person you need to become, than it is to focus on your goals.

In short, focus on the process, not your progress.

Are goals pointless if you're just going to focus on building habits?

No, not necessarily. A goals gives you direction, it helps guide you to where you want to go. Without goals you'd do nothing. Everyone sets goals, though few people write them down. Everyone sets daily goals without realizing it, "watch TV shows at 8pm tonight". Most of the time what you want now isn't what you really want. It's not until you start taking action, that you might realize your current long-term goals aren't what you actually want in the long run.

The mistake people believe about goal-setting is that it gives them control. Goals only hint at giving you control. Thinking you want a new BMW car means you have control over your future, and in a sense you do. But again, you can't change the outer world until you first take control of the inner world, your thoughts, beliefs and behaviors.

The problem with only focusing on goals, is that it makes believe that once you achieve it you'll be happier. Not being happy with what you have now can actually hurt your performance. Therefore, if you were to just focus on

the process instead of your progress, you'll be able to enjoy the present moment, while improving at the same time.

Doing the process is going to get boring at times, there's no other way to look at it. When you do the same thing over-and-over the motivation is going to fade and you're going to get bored at times. Learn to love the boredom because there's no way to improve unless you put up with some level of boredom. Otherwise, you'll be looking outside of yourself for inspiration which will always be fleeting.

Depending on the goal, it can actually effect your long-term progress. Let's say for example, you have a goal where you want to look good for summer. You're going to start going to the gym 4x a week, and eat healthier to get that sexy beach body. Once the summer comes and you've achieved your goal. You stop and all your progress diminishes.

Therefore, certain goals actually compete with consistent, long-term progress. Habits prevent the 'yo-yo' effect. It doesn't matter how quickly you move forward, the point of habits is that you only move forward. Whereas with goals, you're constantly making progress, falling back, making progress, falling back. It's a viscous cycle that can be prevented by setting a goal and then picking specific habits that are needed to move you toward your goal.

If we go back to the 'sexy beach body' example. If that person would have been more focused on starting small and staying consistent to develop habits. They may have not had the body they desired for the summer. But they would have built the habits of going to the gym each week and making healthier eating choices.

Again, don't take this the wrong way. Goals are important, they give you clarity. Though, goals arn't the end-all-be-all. If you set a goal to achieve something a year (or longer) from now, you can't predict whats going to happen between now and than. What you want now, might not be what you want a year from now. Therefore, don't put too much pressure on yourself to achieve your goal in this moment. Allow goals to help you figure out whats important to you right now.

When you figure out whats important to you, set goals that you can control. It’s commonly preached to put a deadline on a goal, and deadlines do have their place. But if your goal is to get strong, and you decide you want to Squat 255-lbs by August 1st. That’s not a goal you can control.

If you want to become a millionaire in a year, that’s not something you can control.

Setting a goal to squat a certain amount of weight is something you can control, as long as you stick with it long enough. Even becoming a millionaire is something you can control, as long as you stick with it long enough and make the necessary sacrifices needed to get there. While these are outcome based goals, you wouldn’t be putting pressure on yourself to complete the goal by a certain deadline. You would focus on the needed habits to get you to move closer to those goals.

In short, let go of your attachment to result and time based outcomes, but keep setting goals.

Amateur vs. Professional

The amateur sits around waiting for inspiration and motivation to hit them before they take action. Whereas, the professional takes action everyday despite how they fell.

Which category do you fall under?

Developing Habits That Stick

1. Pick a behavior that is important to you. Quite simply, if you don’t care about something, you’re not going to stick with it day-in and day-out. You’d be surprised how many people pick a habit based off of wanting validation or what they believe society thinks is good. Yet, they don’t genuinely believe it to be important to them.
2.

3. Start with doing the easiest thing possible first to bypass mental resistance. When you get that jolt of motivation to improve something in your life, we feel that we can take on the world. Yet, motivation never lasts. Whatever habit you want in your life, choose to do something insanely easy. For example, if you want to be a writer, writer for 1 minute a day. If you want to start running, just put your shoes on and walk out the door everyday. I know you're probably thinking that you'll never accomplish anything this way. But once you get started (which is the hardest part) and you do the smallest thing everyday without fail. This is when inertia takes over and you can't be stopped. If you started by meditating for just 1 minute a day, after a couple weeks you'll find you're capable of meditating for 20 minutes without feeling resistance, at this point, you'll never look back. First comes action, followed by motivation, followed by even more action. Don't sit around waiting for motivation, start small and the motivation will come, guaranteed!
4.
5. Implementation Intentions. There are literally hundreds of research studies that say you should use implied intentions to set your schedule. This is where you'd write down your intent to implement something into your life. If you write down when and where your going to do your new behavior, you're 2-3x more likely to follow through. Don't think you have to write this down, if you've ever mentally told yourself that on 'this day I'm going to do this' than you too have used implementation intentions before. Here's an example of a written implementation intention:
6.
7. Everyday I will partake in at least 15 minutes of
8. vigorous exercise on [DAY] at [TIME OF DAY] at [PLACE.]
9.
10. Attach your new habit to a current behavior that you do every single day without fail. What you're doing here is finding a cue or trigger that will signal to your brain that its time to perform your habit. For example, first thing in the morning once you get out of bed is an excellent time to implement a new habit, such as a morning ritual. Or, everyday at a certain time, or right after you brush your teeth. You get the idea.

11.
12. Use implementation intentions to tie your new habit with your current habit.
13.
14. Everyday after [CURRENT HABIT], I will [NEW HABIT].
15.
16. Everyday after I wake up at 6am, I will meditate for 1 minute.
17.
18. Habits that improve your life. Focus on developing one habit or routine that will improve many areas of your life. Exercise is one of those routines, meditation is one of those habits. This one change will have a cascading effect on other parts of your life, not just your health. By exercising, you'll naturally want to eat healthier. You'll also start to have more energy and feel better about yourself. This positivity can be carried over with how you interact with people or even business partners.

On a final note, focus on building only one habit at a time. Don't try to go after more than that because chances are it only takes one day for you to not be in the mood, or you're too busy, and you just forget to do your behaviors. As long as you focus on one thing at a time, and keep the action step as small as possible to start. By the end of the year, you'll have implemented enough habits to have changed your life quite drastically.

Energy

Most people are focused on managing their time. When they really need to be focused on managing their energy. Everyone has 24 hours in a day, the difference between those that get more done and those that get less done, is how each of them manages their energy. It's a complete mental shift from thinking you need to manage your time to managing your energy.

If you had the energy, you would find the time to perform your new behavior and get the things done you need too.

The next thing to understand is that all hours are not created equal. You have morning people and "night owls". When do you find you get the most

accomplished? Everyone has different times when their ‘creative energy’ is at its highest. For me, I find that I do my best work first thing in the morning before everyone is awake. If I workout that day, than I perform my most important task right after I take a shower, once I get back from the gym. This sets a cue. Showering is my cue to work. When I was getting into a writing habit, I would shower than immediately go write. Getting back to your creative energy, I find the later it gets in the day the less creative I am.

What time of the day is your creative energy at it’s highest?

How To Increase Your Energy

Work in cycles: I highly recommend the 3x15 method for those that are professional procrastinators that are just getting started. You’d work for 3 15-minute chunks back-to-back followed by a 15-minute break. Breaks give your mind a chance to recover. It’s the recovery that is crucial for working long hours everyday and still being productive.

The other approach you can take is working for 90-minutes and taking a 20-minute break. Or, the 60/60/30 method, which means you work for 50 minutes, take a 10-minute break, work for another 50-minutes than basically take a 40-minute break. During the longer break, you’d get some food, something to drink. Get up, stretch, do anything but sit at your desk.

While, these methods are more for organizing your day. They work great for building habits or routines depending on the behavior. These methods give you period of time where you’re really focused on a task, followed by a break. Essentially, a break is your reward. If you’re resistant to working on something, you could easily turn a behavior into a habit for your work. You might start out with just one 15-minute block. Until you eventually build up to do three 15-minute blocks back-to-back.

Keep an energy journal: This doesn’t have to be complicated, it’s as simple as writing down each hour how you’re feeling. Good or bad? Focused or foggy? Energetic or tired? All you’re doing is figuring out at what point in the day you feel good and are at your best. Of course, if you don’t already have the basics covered such as eating healthy, exercise and

sleeping well. You'll want to put some energy into optimizing those first. Because if you're don't have those down, it'll negatively effect your energy levels.

Schedule recovery into your day: As I just talked about, taking breaks after working for a certain amount of time during a focused period gives you the needed time to recover. Having a period of renewal will allow you to replenish your willpower, which is needed to perform a habit everyday, even when you're not in the mood. This is why first thing in the morning is generally the best time to perform a new behavior, though this doesn't always work for everyone.

Sprint more in your life: Stop multi-tasking, do something thats focused and with intent. Don't scatter your energy into a few little things, where you ultimately get very little done. Develop the habit to put all your energy and effort into one thing at any given moment. That one thing should be really important in your life right now. Than plan to recover after you work on it for a bit. It's a simple cycle of sprint (laser-beam focused work) followed by recovery. Recovery can be as simple as taking a 20-minute nap or taking a walk outside on a nice day.

Staggering energy-draining with energy-replenishing activities: There are individuals out there that seem to have unlimited energy when it comes to getting things done. Yet, no one has unlimited energy. Consider staggering the type of activities that pump you full of energy, with one's that drain you of energy. Obviously, there are going to be days where you just have to do energy-draining activities all day long. Thats why you'd schedule in periods of recovery. But if you can somehow plan out a way to stagger activities that drain you, with one's that replenish your energy. You'll be far more likely to stick to those behaviors over the long-term. Which will eventually become a habit and the energy-draining activities will be a lot easier to perform.

For me, when I've been working for a while and feeling like I'm not really getting anywhere. I like to take a longer break, about 45 minutes, and go to the park. Something about being with nature really helps me replenish my energy levels. If I don't have that much time, I take a 5 minute break and

just stand on my patio looking around taking a few deep-connected breathes and get back to the task-at-hand.

Exercise: Write down what activities are draining for you, and plan out how you can stagger in activities that replenish your energy.

Instant Energy Booster

This is a fantastic way to reduce stress and give yourself that needed boost of energy, when you're plowing through a task you're not very interested in.

1. Breathe in slowly for 3 seconds.
2. Breathe out slowly for 6 seconds.

If you're able to master your energy, it'll be far easier for you to master the habits you're going to implement into your life. When most people talk about not having the time to do something, what they're really saying is that they don't have the energy to do that thing. If you can take control of your energy, without a doubt, you'll be able to preform your behavior everyday until it becomes habitual.

Willpower

Everyone struggles with maintaining discipline and consistency through out their life. It's always easy to get yourself to do something when you're inspired or motivated. It's completely different when you're not feeling up to the challenge.

Willpower is all about committing to a schedule to do something over the longterm. But I have some great news, many of the abilities people feel they're lacking such as willpower is just like a muscle. And, like any muscle, its small and weak when it's not used. And, becomes big and strong when it's used frequently. Willpower can be improved overtime to become stronger. It can be depleted and restored. The strength of your willpower muscle can have a huge impact on your entire life.

If you think of your actual muscles, say you work a physical job and you're constantly picking things up and moving around. You're going to be physically tired because your muscles have been drained of energy. After work, if you plan on going to the gym your muscles are already partly fatigued. Therefore, directly exercising your muscles isn't the only factor to how fatigued they're going to be.

Just like willpower, how stressful your day is, how much sleep you've had, if you had to make a difficult decision to not do something you wanted to do, like eating something unhealthy. The list of things that depletes your willpower is completely individual. The second you wake up, you're using your willpower muscle.

How Stress Plays A Role

Stress essential involves the classic "fight or flight" response in your body, which reduces your willpower. Stress and willpower have a distinct connection because when your stress goes up, your ability to plan for the longterm goes down. Planning for the future is essentially what willpower is. Telling yourself that you'll eat healthy now, so you'll be in better shape 3-months from now. Or, if you choose to make 10 sales call a day to grow your business, you'll double your income a year from now.

When you exercise willpower, you're forcing your brain to plan for the future perceived benefits of doing the behavior. If there are things in your life that are causing you stress like your boss, parents, children, spouse or whatever it may be. That stress is negatively effecting your brain to plan for the future. Stress causes you to only care about yourself right now, and not consider the implications on your future, if you don't do the thing you know you should.

If you have better ways to deal with stress, you have ways to plan for the longterm without getting derailed. Here are a few ways to improve the way your body deals with stress:

Sleep: It's generally recommended that you sleep for 7.5 hours a night. Research shows that if you're not able to get enough sleep during the week,

you can actually decrease your ‘sleep debt’ be sleeping in on the weekend. Also if you’re the type of person that gets less than 6-hours of sleep per night, you’re hurting your willpower.

Exercise: As long as you’re exercising consistently and vigorously, it doesn’t really matter what you do. You don’t have to go to the gym if thats not your thing. You can run outside or workout at home. It doesn’t even have to be an hour-long gruelling workout. It can be as quick as 5-10 minutes. You can do some squats, push-ups and sit-ups. You can even do these between your scheduled work breaks, just make sure you’re moving your body.

Eat healthy: Focus on eating whole foods (plants, fruits and meat), get away from the processed foods that are hurting your energy.

Meditation: This is one of the best ways to improve your willpower overtime. Meditation increases blood flow to the prefrontal cortex. Each time you meditate you improve the neural connections in the brain between areas that are responsible for self-control. It will also train your brain to stop chasing every little thought that surfaces in your mind and focus on the things that are actually important to you.

Meditation is a way to guarantee the amount of willpower you’ll have in your life. If you can commit to a 1-minute meditation every morning and eventually build up to a two 20-minute sessions a day. You’ll notice yourself doing the impossible, literally. Honestly, there’s no excuse for not being able to squeeze a 1-minute meditation into your day.

“The best way to improve your self-control is to see how and why you lose control.”
-KELLY MCGONIGAL, author of The Willpower Instinct

The most successful people, thus with the best habits and most willpower, are really no different from you and I. They fail all the time. Everyone slips up and doesn’t have the willpower needed at the time to do the thing the

know they should. The key difference is that when a successful person doesn’t do something, they do it as soon as possible. Therefore, they’re back on track a lot quicker because they have a plan in place. Successful people plan for failure.

Develop A Pre-Routine

It’s inevitable that there are going to be days where you just don't want to work, exercise or eat healthy. You’re going to want to create a routine thats going to mentally put you back together, so you can perform your habit. The reason you want a routine is because willpower dramatically increases when you decrease variability. Which is basically another way of saying, that by having a habitual series of actions in place, you’ll decrease your need to think about something and just do it.

Many people bookend their day with a morning and night ritual. This is where they do a series of behaviors to prepare them for the day. It’s something I recommend to everyone.

Empowering Self-Talk

Stop using the words “can’t” and replace it with the word “don’t”. Using more empowering self-talk can increase your willpower and ability to resist temptation. “I don’t” is more empowering, whereas “I can’t” is very limiting, as most limitations are mental.

5-Minute Rule

Sometimes temptation can be dissolved by waiting just 5-minutes. Whenever you find that you’re feeling a craving, wait just 5 minutes. After 5-minutes, if you still want that thing, than go ahead and have it. Something as simple as this rule can develop your willpower because you’re not giving into instant gratification. If you can counteract spur-of-the-moment urges, you’ll be able to give yourself a chance to think about your decisions.

Self-Perpetuating Cycle of Willpower

Getting started is always the hardest part, its going to take some willpower in the beginning, there's really no way around this. The good thing about willpower, is that if you can structure your day so you have the lowest variability possible. Keep the same sleep schedule, exercise consistently, eat healthy whole foods, and even meditate in the morning.

All of these things improve your ability to exhibit self-control and willpower. Because of this you'll have more willpower. Though it takes willpower to get the ball rolling, once it is rolling, it's a self-perpetuating cycle that just creates more-and-more and can't be stopped.

Keep in mind, when it comes to building habits and sticking to a schedule, it will get easier. Don't give up, just make sure you stay consistent. If you find yourself having problems with consistency, consider that you might be asking too much of yourself.

Meaning, if you have trouble writing 2000 words a day, or you have trouble meditation for 30 minutes in the morning. While it seemed like a good idea at the time, but you now have resistance to doing the behavior. Consider doing less.

Consider writing just 100 words, and if you write more, great. Consider meditating for just 1 minute, and if you meditate more, great. The same concept applies to any behavior you want to turn into a habit. Set the bar so low at first, that its impossible to not do it. And, if you set the bar lower and you still find yourself unable to be consistent, that means the bar is still too high or quite possibly, that behavior just isn't really something thats important to you.

For example, if you were trying to meditate for 1 minute but still couldn't "find the time". Consider just sitting down, and taking 1 deep breath. With writing, you could just open up a text editor and write something silly. If you want to go running, you could just put on your shoes and walk out the door. There's really no excuses here.

Since getting started is the hardest part, remember to do the easiest step possible to get started.

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HOW TO CREATE DRIVE & MOTIVATION

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– THE SYSTEM THAT NEVER FAILS –

In this chapter, I’m going to cover the power of small and immediate rewards to motivate yourself to take action now to benefit your future-self.

Long-Term goals vs. Short-term goals

Long-term goals give you direction and give your life a sense of purpose. They also give your guidance on which short-term goals should be.

Two types of long-term goals

1. Task Completion
2. Personal Development

Goal-Setting Guidelines

1. Make it reasonable
2. Make it measurable
3. Make it controllable
4. Don’t reset the goal

The best thing you can do is to set no more than 3 goals for the next year. If you’re a chronic procrastinator, only choose 1 goal. Once you know your end goals. You would create a goal for this month, which you’d then create a goal for the week, and finally, a goal for tomorrow. Assuming you don’t start today.

Think in three’s. 3 goals for the year, month, week, day.

Again, if that's too much for you. Think in one's. 1 goal for the year, month, week, day. Everyday you'd do something that'd move you closer to your goal.

If you're a chronic procrastinator, I would highly suggest you only focus on one thing. It's much better to finish the year achieving only one goal. Then to set three goals and achieve none because you procrastinated on all of them.

Though, if you apply the information in this book. You'll easily be able to achieve three realistic goals in a year.

Here are four mistakes people make when setting goals:

Mistake #1: Too Much, Too Soon

This happens all the time to everyone at some point. You get excited about starting something new, you know its not going to be easy. Yet, you tell yourself that you'll go "all out" for 90-days than you'll be set.

Take for example, you want change your physique to something more desirable because summer is coming. You put yourself on this intense 6-day a week exercise routine with cardio and a strict calorie-limiting diet. Within a week, you've already throw in the towel.

Solution #1: Make It Reasonable

It sounds like a good plan to just double our efforts to get results faster. What usually happens is that we just fail faster when we take on too much, too soon. Or, we avoid/forget to do something, say you were supposed to spend 2 hours working on a project, you go to bed telling yourself, "Its ok, I'll just do 4 hours tomorrow." Tomorrow comes, we don't work, and we go to bed the next day telling ourselves, "No worries, I'll just do 7 hours of work tomorrow and everything will be ok." You know what happens next. No work gets done.

Most people that procrastinate are actually very ambitious people, they want to achieve a lot but have trouble getting started and keeping the momentum going. Does this sound like you?

Mistake #2: Vague or Subjective Finish Line

You want to focus on the process, not your progress. If your long-term goal is to run for a mile everyday, don't set a goal to "be good at running". It's very subjective as to what a "great run" is. You would start small, and set a goal to "run for 5 minutes a day". What about, "I'm going to take action towards my goal everyday", again its too vague. Instead, you would "make 10 cold calls everyday".

Solution #2: Make It Quantifiable

Make your goal something you can measure. What gets measured, gets accomplished. If your goal is to write, set a word or time limit that you can hit. When you're achieving your goals everyday you get a little release of dopamine which will help you enjoy the process more.
This is where the drive and motivation increases and you'll start to enjoy the process more.

First: Action
Second: Motivation
Third: More Action
Fourth: Even More Motivation

"If you are a procrastinator, you probably aren't aware of this. So you lie around in bed waiting for inspiration to strike. When someone suggests you do something, you whine, "I don't feel like it." Well, who said you were supposed to feel like it? If you wait until you're "in the mood," you may wait forever!"
—UNKNOWN

Mistake #3: Outside of your control

Setting a goal regarding something that you can't control. Which falls under validation and feelings. If you set a goal where the outcome would be to get approval from someone, than you're setting yourself up for failure. If you set a goal where you want to feel a certain way, than you're setting yourself up for failure. If you set a goal to lose a certain amount of weight or making a certain amount of money with a deadline attached. While there's nothing wrong with these, they're out of your control. There's no guarantee to how much weight can be lost or money can be made, in general. Let alone when you attach a deadline to it.

Solution #3: Keep it within your boundary

Keep the goal to something you can control. You can always control your actions, you can never control the outcomes. Since I just taught you to make goals that are quantifiable, make it quantifiable goals that you can effortless perform day-after-day. If you make your quantifiable goal too big, you're making the cardinal mistake #1 — too much, too soon.

Start really small, so small you think it's pointless. These will be so easy to perform, that you'll create a positive feedback loop in your brain. There'll also be no resistance to performing the behavior. Slowly but surely, add more-and-more to the daily behavior until you're at a comfortable limit. You maybe even find out that your original goal to perform X everyday was too much. Even after doing the behavior everyday for a few months.

Mistake #4: Immediately Resetting Your Goals

If you set a goal to write 1000 words a day, once you complete the goal, you than set another goal to write 1000 words. And, you keep repeating this cycle until you eventually "fail". Even though you may have completed two 1000 word goals, if you failed on the third goal, your brain remembers it. And, it can begin to associate failure to the behavior, if done enough times.

Solution #4: Don't immediately reset Your Goals — Everything after is BONUS

Say you wanted to develop a 30 minute daily meditation habit. But you're starting off really small at 5 minutes. If you go over 5 minutes, its just a bonus, it doesn't matter. All that matters is that you hit your 5 minute goal and the the next day you would focus on the same thing. That way the days that you're not really in the mood, you only have to do the minimum, in this case it would be the 5 minute meditation.

You might not see how starting really small might be beneficial to you right now. A year from now you'll be glad you started small, and you're making leaps-and-bounds of progress in comparison to those around you.

Rewarding Results vs. Effort & Time

Rewarding Results: This is a good method if you know how long it will take you to complete the task. It's also good if you can break down the task into smaller chunks that can be accomplished quickly. You don't want to be going too long without a reward, otherwise it defeats the purpose of doing this. You also don't want to only reward yourself after you complete a series of tasks (ie. Your typical to-do list). This is far more effective if you reward yourself after the completion of a single-task.

Rewarding Effort & Time: This method tells you exactly how often you'll be rewarded and will train your brain to associate effort with reward. For example, if you go running for 15-minutes, the second you finish, you'll give yourself a reward. Therefore, the longer you work towards a goal, the bigger the reward should be. This what you'd be associating in the brain.

Though, this method of reward is far more difficult to measure, unlike rewarding results. Just because you're putting in the time doesn't mean you're making progress. It would be far better to have a measurable goal such as to write 100 words a day than it would be to write for 5 minutes. Both are small so you wouldn't face resistance, but only the '100 word' goal can be measurable progress.

Whereas, if you choose to write for 5 minutes, you might have "writers block" and only write 10 words and call it a day. This depends entirely on your long-term goal, because certain things are very beneficial when you

train your brain to associate reward with time such as working, exercising, ect.

What is a reward?

A reward must stimulate your reward circuitry, which makes a reward very individual. Only you can know what the right reward would be and these rewards will likely change over time. If you're growing as an individual, what might be a reward for you today, might not be a reward for you a year from now. This reward must reinforce the fact that you want to do the behavior more.

Which means the reward must be contingent on the behavior and be given immediately. This is crucial because the delay is what causes procrastination to come into play. The quicker you get a reward, the less likely you'll procrastinate. Thats why the reward must be given immediately upon completion of the behavior. Have your reward beside or as close to you as possible so you can have it right away.

Take for example, swimming at a lake. Most people want to swim in the lake, its very enjoyable. Yet, that initial plug into the cold water is what makes people hesitant to dive in at first, it makes them procrastinate, even if its only for a few minutes, its still procrastination. Whereas, smoking is so addicting because it gives the individual an instant nicotine high, even though the high only lasts for ~1 minute. It's still an instant reward.

There's two types of rewards:

1. Primary
2. Secondary

Primary Rewards

1. Sex when horny
2. Food when hungry
3. Water when thirsty
4. Heat when cold

5. Money
6. Music

These are all things that give you a pleasurable sensation. The Premack's Principle states that an enjoyable activity can reward another that you have resistance to doing. For example, since many children naturally gravitate towards the TV, a parent might reward their child after they wash the dishes with some TV time.

You can use the same principle to reward yourself with a behavior you're having resistance to doing. You might reward yourself with your favorite food after you finish a workout. This might seem counter-intuitive but once working out is a deeply-rooted habit, you can start to work on your diet. This goes back to doing too much, too soon. Pick one change at a time, and give yourself a reward immediately upon completion.

Secondary Rewards

These are symbols of primary rewards such as money. Since money has no intrinsic value, money is a symbol of having more materialistic things, increased status, increased food, some even believe it can increase their sex life. Secondary rewards travel straight through the amygdala, through all your senses to release dopamine. If used correctly, secondary rewards can be more powerful than primary rewards.

Secondary rewards are as simple as seeing a little red notification at the top of your Facebook window. You've got to check it, get that validation. Or even a video game, which give rewards for completing levels. This is why social media, video games and the internet in general are very addicting.

The 3 x 15 Method

This is a little corny but its a very simple method to keep yourself focused on completing your behavior with as little resistance as possible. The Pomodoro technique is very popular, and quite effective if you don't have a procrastinating problem. If you don't know what the Pomodoro technique

is, it’s a time on, time off system. You work for 25 minutes, followed by a 5 minute break. You repeat this 3 more times, than take a 30 minute break.

2 hours is a long time if you’re a procrastinator, this is going to set off all types of alarm bells in your brain. And you may even be excited to give it a shot, but the issue is always consistency. Therefore, I propose the 3x15 method and here’s how it works:

Choose your goal that you want to work on.
On a piece of paper draw 3 boxes stacked on top of each other.
Work on your goal for 15 minutes than color in or check off the box once completed the 15 minutes.
Write next to the box an encouraging statement such as “You’re doing fantastic.”
When you’re done the 3 boxes, give yourself a reward and take a short break.



Tips

Start with 1 3x15s a day and slowly work your way up to how ever many you’d like
Choose a unique alarm for your timer that way every time you hear the alarm it becomes a condition reinforcer.

Do not reset your daily goal, consider extra work as a bonus.
Take it slow, build the habit and don’t rush the process.

Rewarding Results

It can be really difficult to reward yourself after you’ve accomplished each task on your to-do list. Again, this is because what rewards today, isn’t necessarily whats going to reward you a week from now. The reason modern video games are so addicting is because the objectives are clear, rewards are often and the various ways to see if you’re making progress are quite frequent.

If you start to write down everything you’ve accomplished at the end of the day, everyday. You’ll begin to have a more rewarding experience at the end of each day. This is because sometimes even though you’re putting time into your goal, it doesn’t feel like you’re making progress.

Since you’ll be writing down everything you’ve done each day before bed, you’ll see what you’re actually accomplishing. This will increase your drive and motivation to keep moving forward. This will also increase your self-esteem, which in turn will result in you making even more progress because you feel good about yourself. You won’t be constantly beating yourself up by using negative self-talk. Instead, you’ll be using positive self-talk to motivate yourself further. Resulting in you investing a lot of time and energy into getting better at something.

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– 4 –

BECOMING MORE FOCUSED & LESS DISTRACTED

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– ACCOMPLISHING MORE IN LESS TIME –

It doesn’t matter how many good ideas you come up with in your life time, if you’re unable to focus on any one of them for a certain length of time you’ll never see it come to fruition. It seems in the age of the internet that people are training their brain to become more distracted. Quick videos and many pictures train you to not be able to focus.

If there’s anything in your life that you’re avoiding, its likely because it takes effort to focus on it. If you have trouble sitting down to work, this is why, it takes effort to focus on working. Effort takes work, therefore you procrastinate. This also happens when you create a cycle of doing something than failing over-and-over. This vicious cycle is what causes you to dread work. Your subconscious is doing its best to protect you, even though its not really in your best interest.

How to increase your focus?

As I mentioned before, being able to focus on something long enough is just a habit and a muscle. Just like going to the gym and improving your body is habit and a muscle. A habit because without consistency you’ll never get anywhere. And like a muscle, because with effort and work the muscle will grow. When you’re constantly building your focus muscle it hypertrophies, when you don’t exercise your focus muscle it atrophies.

You may only be able to focus for 1 minute at first, thats ok. That just means you are currently at your worst. Remember, this is you at your worst. As long as you work at it everyday without fail, your focus muscle will grow. Each day that passes you will improve and continually get better-and-better at focusing. Resulting in you accomplishing more in your life, in less time.

To increase your focus muscle you're going to start very small, reward the new behavior and avoid punishing yourself.

Starting Small: You'll start with the 3x15 method, this will train your brain to focus for chunks of 15 minutes. Its far easier than sitting down for an hour or more which can cause mental resistance, and than you'll never be consistent enough to build a habit. Over time you can gradually increase the length you work for with more distractions around you. Noise and people walking around you won't bother you because you won't even notice it, you'll be in your little zone, a flow state.

More Frequent Rewards: When you get a reward it releases dopamine (which gives you energy) and acetylcholine (which helps you focus). Acetylcholine is a chemical that makes paying attention easier. When you know there's rewards for performing a certain behavior, it makes paying attention much easier. Once you get the reward, it makes paying attention and continuing even easier. It's a positive loop that feeds itself.

More Frequent Breaks: This is another way to build your focus muscle. Taking breaks gives you a chance to reward yourself but also gives you the ability to give your focus muscle a moment to rest. That way when its time to focus again, it's charged up and ready to go. This is why people find that once they start working in time chunks, their focus and productivity increases dramatically.

They know they only have to work for a certain period of time, and a break is really just another type of reward. Remember, when you take a break don't stay in the same place. Get up, change rooms or go outside and move your body. If you decide to stay in the same place, do something that involves your attention in a passive manor such as watching a video or playing a little game.

Meditation: If you haven't given meditation a try yet, despite the many benefits. Here's yet another reason to do the practice: it can help you improve your ability to focus. It only takes 20 minutes a day to see results. I recommend concentration meditation.

Even Steve Jobs was a meditator. Biographer Walter Isaacson quotes Jobs as saying:

"If you just sit and observe, you will see how restless your mind is. If you try to calm it, it only makes it worse, but over time it does calm, and when it does, there's room to hear more subtle things--that's when your intuition starts to blossom and you start to see things more clearly and be in the present more. Your mind just slows down, and you see a tremendous expanse in the moment. You see so much more than you could see before."

Dual n-Back: Dual n-Back is “game”, a very boring and cognitive demanding game. It’s a game that has been proven to train your working memory, which increases the capacity of the focus of attention. It takes about 20 minutes a day, and you can see noticeable results after a week. Though, if you had to choose between meditation and Dual n-Back, I would recommend you go with meditation. There’s only so much time in the day. Finally, if you decide to look into DnB, I personally wouldn’t buy into the information regarding improving your IQ, from my understanding, there’s no proof of that. DnB does in fact train your working memory, allowing you to have deeper levels of focus.

Using punishment as a way to “motivate” yourself actually depletes dopamine and serotonin, which makes it more difficult to focus. Do NOT punish yourself when you lose focus, just bring your focus back to whatever you’re doing for the 15-minute chunk.

Meditation is becoming more-and-more popular these days, and essentially concentration meditation is just a focusing exercise. When you’re working for 15 minutes at a time, you’re mind is going to wonder, you’re going to get distracted by something passing by, it’s normal. All you do is simply bring your attention back to the task-at-hand. In meditation, when a thought surfaces to the conscious mind the meditator doesn’t punish himself, “Wow, another thought, my brain is stupid.”

All the meditator does is recognize the thought and bring their attention back to their breath. Without beating themselves up via verbal punishment. The same is done when focusing on a task. The second you become aware

that you've lost focus, bring your attention back. It doesn't matter if you have to bring your attention back 100 times over the course of 15 minutes, thats the practice. Then every time you bring your attention back, reward yourself with some positive self-talk, some form of encouragement.

Dopamine consolidates the brain pathways for whatever led to the reward. Every time you reward yourself for doing a certain behavior your brain makes that pathway stronger, which makes doing that thing easier-and-easier every time you're rewarded for doing it.

A huge myth about habits is that you just need to repeat something enough times for it to become habitual. This couldn't be further from the truth. The truth is that something becomes habitual because of the reward that behavior gives you. Therefore, whatever behavior you want to become a habit quickly, make sure it's a behavior that is rewarded. Behavior thats rewarded becomes habitual much quicker than something that is just done in repetition.

Don't believe me? Think of washing the dishes or vacuuming. Those behaviors are punishments for many people, even though it results in a clean living space. Having a clean living space can be perceived as a reward, but if you gave someone a real reward. You'd see them suddenly washing dishes or vacuuming more often.

Taking Breaks

This is simple but important. Taking breaks is a form of a reward. If you're focused on a task for an allotted amount of time, once the timer goes off you take a break. That's a reward. You're training your brain to stay as focused as possible on a specific task for 3x15, than you'll be rewarded for that effort with a break (and maybe more). Most people's brains aren't trained that way because regular jobs have people work for 3-4 hours straight before they get a break. And, we all know what happens there, they aren't very focused. Their minds constantly wonder throughout their shifts.

Not only are breaks rewards, they're also a way to give your focus muscle a chance to rest. It's exactly like lifting weights. If you perform a heavy set,

for the most part, the longer you rest in between sets the more you'll be able to lift during the next set. Of course, there's only so much weight you can lift. Just like there's only so long you can take a break before it just becomes a waste of time. You only need anywhere from 10-30 minutes to rest your focus muscle. I usually recommend 15 minutes in the beginning. Once you build the habit of performing the 3x15 method, you can perform breaks like this:

Work: 3x15
Break: 15 minutes
Work: 3x15
Break: 30 minutes

You would just repeat that process until you're done working for the day. You'll find that by following this "time-management" system, you'll get more done in a day by being more focused, and rewarding that focus with breaks. Then you would by just working straight for a couple of hours.

Here are effective ways to take your breaks:

- Always take your break in a different room or location
- Try to move your body. If you're sitting all day, do some stretches or foam rolling exercises
- Daydream or visualization exercises
- Do anything thats extrinsically rewarding to you

There are two-types of attention:

1. Passive
2. Active

Passive Attention: This is when your attention is pulled in by something such as movies or video games.

Active Attention: This is a crucial skill to have. This is when you're trying to filter out your surroundings and choosing what to focus on, such as when someone is working in a coffee shop. You want this skill because when you

have the ability to focus, working feels like less of an effort. Remember, harder it is to focus, the more effort it takes to do something.

Work Boundaries

You want to create boundaries that separate your working environment from your personal environment. What I mean by this, is that if you only have a laptop, perform your work in a different place than where you'd check your email or browse the internet. Essentially, you're training your brain to associate a room or an environment with work.

Also, create a definitive time between work and play.

There are two types of distractions:

1. External
2. Internal

External: Someone walks by your desk, your cell phone vibrates, construction in your neighborhood. Make sure you leave your cell phone in another room and leave it on silent. Depending on where you work, close your door so you won't be distracted. If you're environment is naturally noisy, pick up some headphones and play some sort of "focusing music". Youtube has a lot, or you can purchase a theta brainwave track to help you focus and block out the noise.

Internal: Hunger, thirst, washroom, self-talk "I'm bored", had a fight with your spouse, an idea pops up that you have to execute right now. Always prepare yourself before you work by going to the washroom and making sure you have some water beside you. That way there's nothing that can break your focus. If an idea pops into your head, just write it on a piece of paper. Once you do that, you won't think about it anymore.

Why The Internet Is Your Biggest Distraction

Constant new information, novelty, social validation, and escapism mechanism. When we expect a reward but don't get one your dopamine

gets depleted. The internet is a consistent dopamine fix, with an unlimited amount of updates, pictures and videos to keep you hooked in as long as possible.

Resisting distractions depletes willpower. I'd recommend not giving yourself the ability to resist anything, it requires too much willpower and one day you will slip up. Instead, I recommend you purchase a professional website blocker such as Norton Family or Qustodio, set it up and give someone you trust the password. That way there are no ways around it. Of course, you can just get a free version like StayFocused, but those are easily by passed.

Pre-Emptive Distractions

1. Decide what your going to do the second you sit down at the computer
2. If you decide to check email or social media, set a timer, and commit to stopping when the timer goes off. Reward yourself for actually stopping and understand that each time you stop, you're taking control of your behavior.
3. If you're browsing the internet and you can't seem to stop, do this:
    a. Take a moment to pause
    b. Tell yourself that your brain is seeking something thats not there. Checking just 'one more thing' will not satisfy the craving.
    c. Remove yourself from the computer, by all means necessary.

Most common distractions:

- Internet
- Cell phone
- Hunger / thirst
- Ideas / thoughts
- Need to go to the washroom

Distractions checklist:

[ ] Block addicting websites (StayFocused, Norton Family, Qustido, OpenDNS)
[ ] Put cellphone on silent and in another room
[ ] Fill up water bottle
[ ] Go to the washroom
[ ] Have a piece of paper to jot down ideas that surface. Your brain is designed to create ideas, not store them.

Foundation of Focus

While to cover these three areas, is out of the scope of this book:

1. Diet
2. Exercise
3. Sleep

It can't be overlooked how important these three areas of your life truly are. If any one of these three area's are not addressed correctly. You may be affecting your level of focus and productivity. Though, if you've read this far, you know I don't agree with dramatic shifts in one's life. Because it's not maintainable for most people.

I would recommend you pick a single area and stick with it until it becomes habitual for you. I would usually recommend most people start with sleep because it's the easiest to fix. Though, that depends entirely on your current lifestyle. What does matter, is you pick one of the areas to improve and take action immediately.

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– 5 –

HOW TO HANDLE FEELING INDECISIVE

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– REASONS YOU FEEL UNSURE –

Having progress in whatever you're doing is vital for you to enjoy it. When you take away your feeling of progress, it means you're running around in circles. It's very frustrating to put effort into something that doesn't make any progress.

From an evolutionary stand point, humans are hard-wired to avoid putting effort into something that isn't rewarding. If you're putting effort into a project, and no matter what you do you feel as though it's not making progress, you're going to avoid it.

If you can recognize moments where you feel indecisive. Just see them for what they are, and do your best to move through them as quickly as possible. That way they don't hinder your focus, fulfillment in the project and productivity.

Indecision lowers feelings of competence, which leads to frustration, and in the end it lowers your drive. Because you're working but not moving forward, thus lowering your drive to complete the task.

Its impossible to move forward in life without experiencing some level of indecision. You don't have enough information to make a decision, thus you're going to have a to take a leap of faith. If you make a mistake, no matter what, correct your error and keep moving forward.

Low Self-Efficacy

There's a reason why people with high self-esteem achieve more in their life than those with lower self-esteem. This has to do with self-efficacy, which means your belief in your ability to reach goals or complete tasks. If

you don’t believe you can do something, you’re going to be second guessing your actions, which obviously leads to indecision.

How to increase self-efficacy:

- Having previous success in a certain area (ie. If you’ve started a business before, you’ll feel confident about starting another one, even if the previous business failed)
- Find someone who succeeded at something you want to succeed at and model them (read biographies or find a mentor)
- Increase your skills in the area of your business
- Just do it. Most of the time you’re indecisive because you flat out don’t know what to do. Therefore, the best thing you can do is just about anything. If you fail, than you know that doesn’t work and you redirect your course of action.
- Stop comparing yourself to others. You don't know how much time and effort someone has put into something to get to where they are. By comparing yourself to someone who’s further along than you all you. All you’re doing is hurting your self-esteem and you might even verbally beat yourself up. The truth is there’s nothing special between you and the people that are successful. A lot of people think their procrastination problem is worse then most. When in actuality, the average person who’s successful is just an unsure and afraid to take action as you are. The only difference is that they did the tiniest thing possible to move forward in spite of their feelings at the time. By taking this tiny action, they were able to overcome their fear. Which enabled them to take even more action.

Competing Goals

Another cause of indecision is that your choices seem to contradict a goal or personal value that you have. For example, if you’re trying to start a business but you need money now. You might be feeling stuck between wanting to do ‘get rich quick’ methods or building something that will stand the test of time.

If this is the case, you'd be far better off getting a job in the real world that would enable you to pay your bills. While freeing up your mental energy to focus on building something that would last. At the end of the day you're going to have to figure out if you have any competing goals. If you do, figure out how you can solve this problem.

Perfectionism

Perfectionism for the most part, comes from seeking validation, caring what others think of you. In short, if you care what others think of you it's because in some way you feel that you're not good enough or not important. When you seek perfection in something, you do this because if your project isn't perfect. Which is just your perception of perfection (understand that its only your perception), not what others think.

You might think that you'll receive negative criticism for your effort. And, the "real you" can't handle negative criticism due to where your current level of self-esteem is at. Those with high self-esteem care less about what others think of them. Esteem meaning worth, what you think you're worth. Therefore others do not determine your worth for you.

Perfectionism can also stem from criticizing and judging others. You think to yourself how you don't want to be like them, which sets up all these barriers of "perfection" that you're trying to avoid at all costs. Ultimately, leading you no where because you're too afraid of what others will think of you.

Being critical of others is just a habit which can be stopped. As long as you keep procrastinating, you will never get your work done, which means you'll never be judged. Unfortunately, your precious ego that is trying to "protect" you will have no choice but to take the harsh "criticism" if you want to progress.

Another technique you can use to overcome perfectionism is to follow the 80% rule. Only complete things that are 80% as good as you'd like them to be. Now, I know what you're thinking. This sounds lazy, but it's not. When

you envision a project in your head, it will never come to fruition in the real world.

And, if it could, the amount of time and effort you'll put into that final 20% won't really make that big of a difference in the first place. Any successful company always launches something that isn't perfect and makes the needed changes after the launch. Just focus on getting a project done as quickly as possible. Once it's actually done, you can than figure out if it needs more work or not.

Finally, your own ideas can be the death of your progress. Sometimes we're blinded by our own work, we latch onto an idea which other people would fail to see as great. If we could just let go of that idea thats holding us back, we'd be able to move forward. A lot of great entrepreneurs built their businesses with the "good enough" model. They didn't attach themselves to perfection and if they did they wouldn't have built businesses at successful as they have.

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– 6 –

OVERCOME FEELING ANXIOUS & OVERWHELMED

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– THE FINAL STEP –

Certain things you need to do will cause anxiety, it’s only natural. The reason you have a habit to procrastinate is because when you feel anxious toward doing something. When you escape, lets say you browse the internet to suppress the anxious feelings. This is considered a reward to your brain. Every time you feel anxious, its habitual for you to find a means of escape to suppress the negative emotions.

This is a cycle of anxiety-to-avoidance. The anxiety only gets worse because the longer you avoid that thing, the more your work load piles up. This is why setting even stricter deadlines, thinking you’ll make up for lost time, never works. You’re only putting more pressure on yourself, and you’re only going to want to escape the negative feelings even more.

Sometimes people think negative emotions are good, they tell themselves that its fuel to move them forward. And, maybe for a select few people, it really does. But for most people, negative emotions only hold them back in the long run, they serve no real purpose. Negative emotions blunt creativity and focus.

Feeling Overwhelmed

The best way to manage the feeling of overwhelm is to write down everything you have to do in small-manageable steps and prioritize them. The 3x15 method is fantastic for dealing with feelings of overwhelm. Procrastinating a certain task can be easily solved by only telling yourself that you’ll work on something for a few minutes.

Fear of structure. Being afraid to lose your freedom is another common trait of procrastinators. Yet, thats just another limiting belief. By having structure

to your day, it can actually make you more productive. That's why it can be very beneficial for most people when they start to implement a morning ritual into their life. This morning ritual gives them structure, and they subconscious recognize how beneficial structure is to their day. If something as quick and simple as a morning ritual can make them more productive. They wonder what would happen if they structure the rest of their day.

Trying structuring parts of your day or even develop a quick morning ritual for yourself.

Get The Ball Rolling

Feeling overwhelmed can usually be conquered by taking the smallest action step. Once you get moving, you'll find the negative feelings fade away and your motivation to complete that task increase. Having intellectual knowledge as to why you do the things you do, usually is quite helpful.

Therefore, here are three steps to help you when you're feeling stuck:

1. **Set a time limit:** When we feel negative emotions towards doing something. Its usually because we perceive that we're going to have to do that thing, for an extended period of time. An amount of time that makes us feel uncomfortable. To work around this, set a time limit that you're comfortable with. This is effective because suppressing the feeling doesn't make it go away, it's just suppressed.

   The only way to get rid of anxiety toward doing something is to work with it. That way the feeling becomes integrated. To do this, ask yourself how long can you work through the anxiety? 30 minutes? 15 minutes? How about a quick 5 minutes?

   Choose any amount of time and commit to working for that time limit. Once you're done, give yourself a reward. Again, I recommend the 3x15 method here, but if thats too much for you, just start with something you can handle.

2. **Do the easiest thing first:** Completing simple and quick tasks first can work magic on your drive and motivation. Rewarding yourself for those ‘easy wins’ are going to program your brain to want more. The easiest way that worked for me when I was first getting started, was to create a morning ritual that I’d complete. In the beginning, as I completed each step of the ritual, I’d reward myself.

   Step 1: Wake up at 6am
   Step 2: Drink water
   Step 3: Meditate 5 minutes
   Step 4: Review goals and ‘to-do’s’
   Step 5: Complete one 3x15

3. **Plan out your day the night before:** While this seems contradictory to the previous step, it’s commonly believed that you should do the hardest tasks first thing in your day. This is also something I recommend, but after a morning ritual. Your morning ritual will be the “easy thing first”. Then once you get to step 5, this is when you’ll do the hardest task for the day.

   The reason you want to do this is because your willpower is the strongest first thing in the morning. You should write down the night before which tasks you need to complete, and prioritize in order of importance. It doesn’t matter if you complete the list or not. All that matters is that you work on the first task for as long as possible or until its completed.

   Once you complete the hardest and most important task for the day, you’ll feel good about yourself and the rest of your day will feel like a walk in the park. Not to mention, this helps you avoid indecision because everyday you’ll be making progress. By working on the most important task that day.

Fear of Failure

Understand that everyone to some degree has a fear of failure. It’s scary to do anything where you put yourself at risk for failing and being judged by others. Sometimes its easier for someone to live in fantasy land dreaming about their life being successful. Other than actually taking action to make that idea come to fruition. Being afraid is natural but you don’t have to let it control your life.

It’s important to understand what the worst thing that can possibly happen is, and it’s very likely its nothing bad at all. As long as your life or someone else's life isn’t dependent upon a single decision you make. There’s really nothing to be afraid of because every mistake you make will just be a learning experience. I understand its easier said than done to rationalize yourself out of procrastination.

Just write down all the ways that you can fail and decide that you acknowledge what it is and you’re going to continue working towards your goal despite the perceived obstacle in front of you.

Successful people are focused on getting things done, not on the illusion of perfection.

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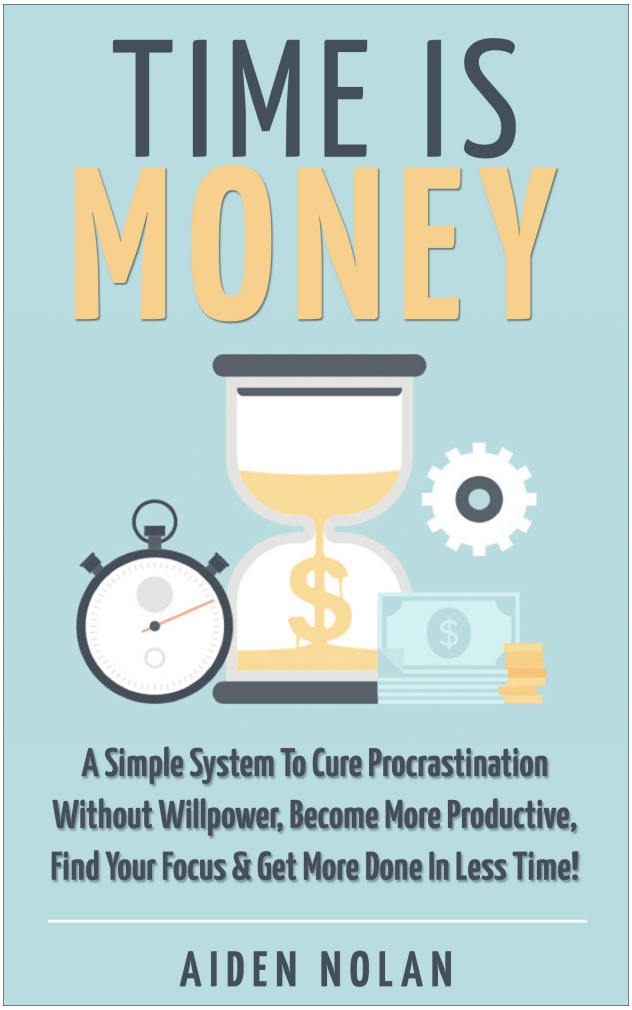
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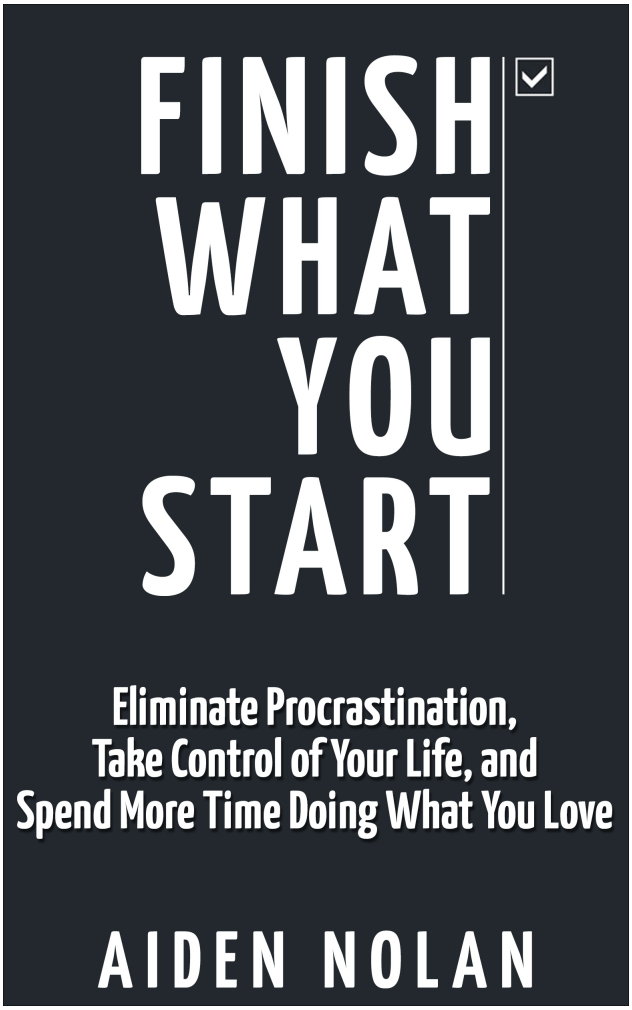
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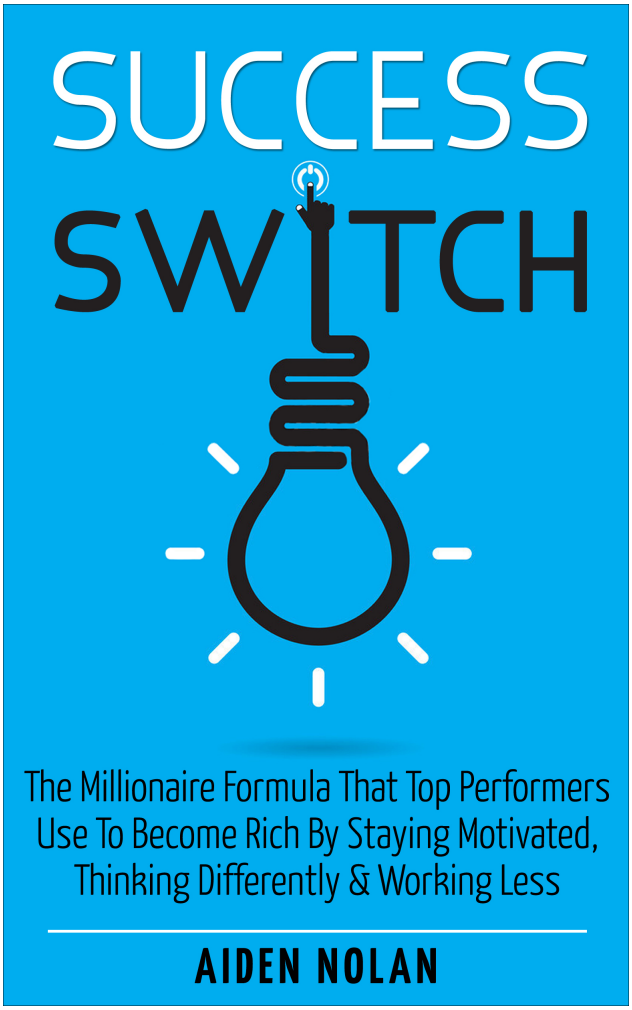
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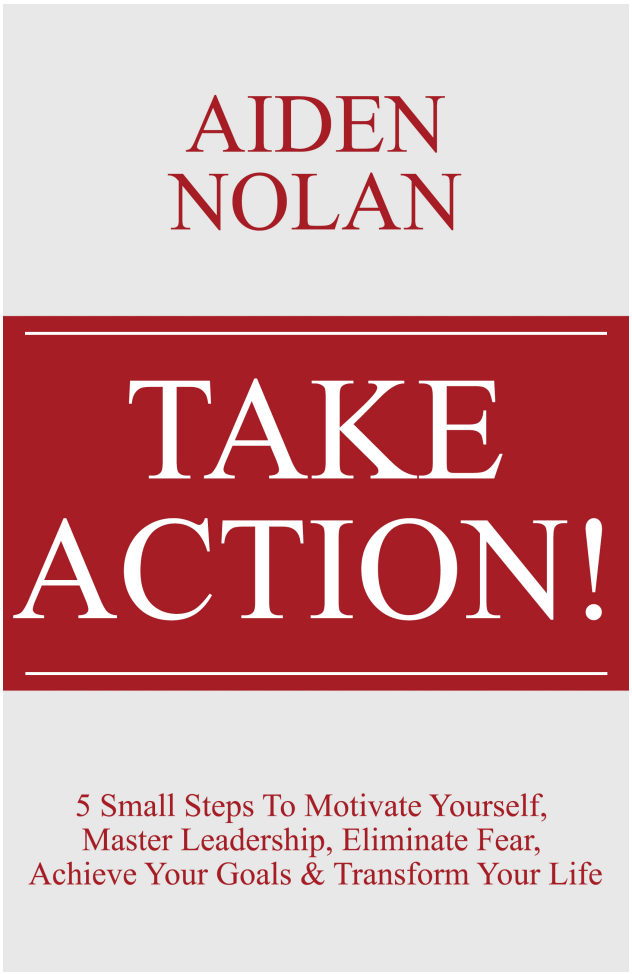
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